

Case 2925

***Crenitis* Bedel, 1881, *Georissus* Latreille, 1809 and *Oosternum* Sharp, 1882 (Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the names of three beetle genera which are junior objective synonyms of names which have not been used since the 19th century. The names are *Crenitis* Bedel, 1881 (threatened by *Fontiscrutor* Pandellé, 1876), *Georissus* Latreille, 1809 (threatened by *Cathamnistes* Illiger, 1807) and *Oosternum* Sharp, 1882 (threatened by *Crypteuna* Motschulsky, 1863).

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Coleoptera; *Crenitis*; *Georissus*; *Oosternum*.

1. This application proposes the conservation of three generic names of beetles, each name being considered separately.

***Crenitis* Bedel, 1881**

2. Letzner (1840, p. 81) described the species *Hydrobius punctatostratus*. In connection with the description of a new genus of HYDROPHILIDAE (*Hemisphaera*), Pandellé (1876, p. 58) introduced a new generic name, *Fontiscrutor*. This name was not accompanied by any description, but was unambiguously proposed for *Hydrobius punctatostratus* and is thus available. Five years later Bedel (1881, p. 306) proposed the genus *Crenitis* for *Hydrobius punctatostratus*; *Crenitis* is therefore a junior objective synonym of *Fontiscrutor*.

3. In Opinion 583 (1960), the Commission conserved *Crenitis* by the suppression of a senior objective synonym, *Creniphilus* Motschulsky, 1845. *Crenitis* Bedel, 1881 was placed on the Official List with *Hydrobius punctatostratus* Letzner, 1840 as type species by monotypy. *Crenitis* was treated as masculine, but actually should be considered feminine, being derived from the Greek (spring nymph), with the suffix '-tis' indicating the feminine gender.

4. Apart from Pandellé (1876), no one has used *Fontiscrutor* as a valid name. Subsequent authors, without exception, have referred to the genus as *Crenitis*. Orchymont (1942, p. 25) recorded *Fontiscrutor* as a synonym of *Crenitis*, but treated it as a nomen nudum. Authors using the name *Crenitis* include Chiesa (1959, p. 121), Leech (1956, p. 338), Matsui & Nakane (1985, p. 89). A further nine references, dating from 1945 to the present and involving a further nine authors, are held by the Commission Secretariat.

5. Thus for more than 100 years the nominal genus *Crenitis* has been used for a well known, predominantly holarctic, genus of hydrophiloid beetles including about 40 named species. A change to the senior name *Fontiscrutor* would give rise to considerable confusion.

***Georissus* Latreille, 1809**

6. Rossi (1794, p. 81) and Fabricius (1798, p. 45) respectively described the species *Byrrhus crenulatus* and *Pimelia pygmaea*, which were synonymized by Schönherr (1806, p. 136) using the name *pygmaea*. This synonymy was generally accepted by subsequent authors and the species was for several decades known under the Fabrician name; *crenulatus* was reinstated as the valid name by Mulsant & Rey (1872, p. 14).

7. Illiger (1807a, p. 297) established a new genus, *Cathammistes*, which he also mentioned in another paper the same year (1807b, p. 322). The generic name was not accompanied by any description, but was unambiguously proposed for *Pimelia pygmaea* and is thus available. Two years later Latreille (1809, p. 377) proposed the generic name *Georissus* for *Pimelia pygmaea*; *Georissus* is therefore a junior objective synonym of *Cathammistes*. Stephens (1828, p. 105) introduced the unjustified emendation *Georyssus*, which has been adopted by some subsequent authors.

8. After Illiger proposed the name *Cathammistes* it has never been used as the valid name for the genus. Subsequent authors, without exception, have referred to the genus as *Georissus* (or *Georyssus*). A few authors have given *Cathammistes* as a synonym or nomen nudum under *Georissus* (e.g. Gemminger & Harold, 1868, p. 930; Ganglbauer, 1904, p. 93; Zaitzev, 1908, p. 313). Other authors using the name *Georissus* include Crowson (1955, p. 56), Delève (1967, p. 236), Satô (1972, p. 207). A further 15 references demonstrating the usage of the name *Georissus*, dating from 1945 to 1995 and involving a further 13 authors, are held by the Commission Secretariat.

9. The current concept of *Pimelia pygmaea* has been confirmed by my examination of the types in Fabricius's collection (Zoological Museum, Copenhagen), as is the synonymy with *Byrrhus crenulatus* Rossi. The latter was redescribed and its identity fixed by the designation of a lectotype by Bameul (1991, pp. 254–257).

10. Thus for almost 200 years the nominal genus *Georissus* (or *Georyssus*) has been used for a well known beetle genus, represented in all major biogeographic regions and including about 75 named species; it is the type genus of the family GEORISSIDAE (considered a subfamily of HYDROPHILIDAE by some authors). A change to the senior name *Cathammistes* would give rise to considerable confusion.

***Oosternum* Sharp, 1882**

11. In a published letter from an expedition to America, Motschulsky (1855, p. 20) referred to a species, *Cryptopleurum* (as '*Cryptopleurus*?) *aequinoctialis*, characterized as 'un gentille espèce fortement sillonnée et plus allongée que celle que nous trouvons chez nous [i.e. in Russia]; peut-être un genre nouveau?'. Although inadequate from a taxonomic view, the description is adequate to make the specific name available.

12. Eight years later, Motschulsky (1863, p. 448) proposed a new genus, *Crypteuna*, for *Cryptopleurum aequinoctialis* [as '*Cryptopleurus aequinoxialis*'], and stated: 'Il diffère des *Cryptopleurus* et des *Cereyon*, par son mésosternum ovulaire, applatie et concave au milieu, et par ses elytres fortement sillonnées'. *Crypteuna* was mentioned again by Motschulsky (1868, p. 60), but seems not to have been used as a valid name since. The generic name *Crypteuna* and the specific name *aequinoctialis*

are clearly available, even though they do not appear in standard catalogues or nomenclators such as Knisch, 1924; Neave, 1939; Sherborn, 1922–1924.

13. In 1882 Sharp (p. 112) established the generic name *Oosternum* for a new species from Central America, *O. costatum*, which is the type species by monotypy. Subsequent to Motschulsky's own references to *Crypteuma*, the name was not mentioned again until Orchymont (1924, p. 262) noted that the name might be synonymous with *Oosternum*, although he was doubtful if the respective type species would be identical. However, he later (1928, pp. 78–79) referred to *Cryptopleurus aequinoxialis* [sic] Motschulsky as a dubious synonym of *Oosternum costatum* Sharp. Subsequently, the synonymies were discussed by Méquignon (1942, p. 28) who noted that: 'la synonymie des deux genres au moins, sinon des deux espèces, est fort vraisemblable'. The synonymy of the genera, but not of the species, was confirmed by Hansen (1991, pp. 304–305) who treated *Crypteuma* as a 'nomen oblitum'.

14. For more than 100 years the name *Oosternum* has been used for a genus of hydrophilid beetles. About 15 species — Nearctic, Neotropical, Afrotropical, East Palearctic, Oriental and Australian — have at various times been referred to *Oosternum*. The genus was redefined by Hansen (1991, pp. 304–305) and comprises more than 30 known species (including the type species of *Crypteuma* and several yet to be described) restricted to the Nearctic, Neotropical and southeastern Palearctic regions. *Crypteuma* has not been used as a valid name since Motschulsky's references to it. On the other hand, *Oosternum* has been used by all subsequent authors (e.g. Arnett, 1960, p. 220; Leech, 1956, p. 339; Smetana, 1978, p. 44; Spangler, 1962, p. 97). A further nine references demonstrating the usage of the name *Oosternum*, dating from 1945 to 1995 and involving a further four authors, are held by the Commission Secretariat. A change to the senior name *Crypteuma* would give rise to considerable confusion.

15. A prima facie case exists under Article 79c(2) for the conservation of the three names *Crenitis* Bedel, 1881, *Georissus* Latreille, 1809 and *Oosternum* Sharp, 1882 by the suppression of their senior objective synonyms.

16. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the following generic names for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy:
 - (a) *Fontiscrutor* Pandellé, 1876;
 - (b) *Cathammistes* Illiger, 1807;
 - (c) *Crypteuma* Motschulsky, 1863;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *Georissus* Latreille, 1809 (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy *Pimelia pygmaea* Fabricius, 1798 (a junior subjective synonym of *Byrrhus crenulatus* Rossi, 1794);
 - (b) *Oosternum* Sharp, 1882 (gender: neuter), type species by monotypy *Oosternum costatum* Sharp, 1882;
- (3) to emend the entry on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology for *Crenitis* Bedel, 1881 to read 'gender: feminine' in place of 'gender: masculine';

- (4) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *crenulatus* Rossi, 1794, as published in the binomen *Byrrhus crenulatus* (senior subjective synonym of the type species of *Georissus* Latreille, 1809);
 - (b) *costatum* Sharp, 1882, as published in the binomen *Oosternum costatum* (specific name of the type species of *Oosternum* Sharp, 1882);
- (5) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *Fontiscrutor* Pandellé, 1876;
 - (b) *Cathanmistes* Illiger, 1807;
 - (c) *Crypteuna* Motschulsky, 1863.

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